

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. (currently amended) A lever apparatus in a motor vehicle, with a carrier component holding a bearing element on which an actuating lever of the lever apparatus is pivotably fastened, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the carrier component (2) has an opening (14) through which the bearing element (5) protrudes, ^{wherein} ~~in that~~ the bearing element (5) is a hollow sheet metal part which has at least one laterally protruding supporting means (16) which bears against a rear side (17) of the carrier component (2), and wherein ~~in that~~ the actuating lever (4) on the bearing element (5) is axially enclosed between the front side (18) of the carrier component (2) and a retaining part (9) arranged on the bearing element (5).
2. (currently amended) The lever apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the supporting means (16) is an annular collar which is formed on the bearing element (5).
3. (currently amended) The lever apparatus as claimed in claim 1 ~~either of claims 1 and 2,~~ wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the supporting means (16) is formed at one end (15) of the bearing element (5).
4. (currently amended) The lever apparatus as claimed in claim 1 ~~one of claims 1 to 3,~~ wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the supporting means (16) is additionally joined to the carrier component (2) on the rear side (17) thereof.
5. (currently amended) The lever apparatus as claimed in claim 1 ~~one of claims 1 to 4,~~ wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the retaining element (9) is a clamping ring which is pressed onto the bearing element (5).
6. (currently amended) The lever apparatus as claimed in claim 1 ~~one of claims 1 to 5,~~ wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the carrier component (2) is a metal sheet.

7. (currently amended) The lever apparatus as claimed in claim 1 ~~one of claims 1 to 6,~~
wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the sleeve-shaped bearing section (10) of the bearing
element (5) ends with an end wall (12) at its end (11) which is situated on the side of the
actuating lever (4) and simultaneously coincides with the end there of the bearing
element (5).
8. (currently amended) The lever apparatus as claimed in claim 7, wherein ~~characterized in~~
~~that~~ the end wall (12) has a passage opening (19).
9. (currently amended) The lever apparatus as claimed in claim 7 ~~either of claims 7 and 8,~~
wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the transition (13) of the cylindrical shape of the bearing
section (10) to the end wall (12) is rounded.
10. (currently amended) The lever apparatus as claimed in claim 1 ~~one of claims 1 to 9,~~
wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the bearing element (5) is a deep drawn part.